

REMARKS

Summary of Amendments

Claims 1 through 10 were originally presented in this application. New claims 11-17 were added in a response to the first Office action, dated November 23, 2005, on the merits. New claims 18 and 19 are added in this paper. No claims have been canceled in this or any other paper. Claim 1 has been amended, as described in more detail below, to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. Claims 1 through 19 remain pending.

Election/Restriction

Previously presented claims 11-17 were withdrawn by the Examiner as being directed to a non-elected invention in the Office action of dated February 23, 2006. Applicants note that with the filing of an RCE, this application is essentially a new application. As such, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to enter and examine previously presented claims 11-17.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

1. Independent Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Kuibira et al.* (U.S. Pat. No. 6,508,884). In particular, the Examiner states:

Kuibira discloses a holder 1 for use in semiconductor or liquid crystal manufacturing devices, as shown in Figs. 1-7, comprising: a ceramic susceptor 10b & 14 and a composite of a ceramic 10a and a metal (col. 10, lines 53-63) furnished atop said ceramic susceptor.

2. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection to the extent that it is pertinent to amended claim 1. Claim 1 has been amended to recite: "a composite of a ceramic and a metal furnished atop said ceramic susceptor, the composite including a mixture of metallic and ceramic constituents, the mixture including metallic microconstituents distributed in a ceramic matrix." This amendment to claim 1 is supported by Paragraph [0020] of the original specification, such that no new search is required and no new matter has been added. In support of the amendment, paragraph [0020] states that the ceramic-metal composite may be fabricated, for example, by "infiltrating metal into porous ceramic, or blending and post-mold sintering ceramic powder with metal powder."

3. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1, as amended, distinguishes patentably over the prior art of record in that it recites that "the composite includ[es] a mixture of metallic and ceramic constituents, the mixture including metallic microconstituents distributed in a ceramic matrix." Nowhere does the prior art of record teach, or even suggest, a holder comprising a composite having metallic microconstituents distributed in a ceramic matrix. In fact, as described in Applicants' previous response, the prior art of record fails to even disclose a holder comprising a composite material of any kind.
4. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that independent claim 1, as amended, is patentable over the prior art of record. Independent claim 1 being allowable, it follows *a fortiori* that dependent claims 2 through 10 must also be allowable, since these dependent claims carry with them all the elements of independent claim 1.
5. Applicants further submit that previously presented independent claim 11 is patentable over the prior art of record in that it recites a "ceramic-metal composite including a substantially uniform mixture of ceramic and metal microconstituents." Nowhere does the prior art of record teach, or even suggest, a holder including a ceramic-metal composite composed of a substantially uniform mixture of ceramic and metal microconstituents.
6. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that independent claim 11, as previously presented, is patentable over the prior art of record. Independent claim 11 being allowable, it follows *a fortiori* that dependent claims 12 through 17 must also be allowable, since these dependent claims carry with them all the elements of independent claim 11.
7. Applicants present new claims 18 and 19 for consideration in this paper. New claims 18 and 19 are supported by the original specification, such that no new search is required and no new matter has been added. In particular, new claims 18 and 19 are supported by paragraph [0020] of the original specification, which states that the ceramic-metal composite may be fabricated, for example, by "infiltrating metal into porous ceramic, or blending and post-mold sintering ceramic powder with metal powder."
8. Applicants respectfully submit that new claims 18 and 19 are allowable for the same reasons as independent claim 1 from which they depend. New claims 18 and 19 are further distinct from the prior art of record in that they respectively recite a ceramic-metal composite including "a sintered mixture of metal and ceramic powders" and "metal infiltrated into a porous ceramic substrate". Applicants therefore request that the Examiner allow new claims 18 and 19.

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Accordingly, Applicants courteously urge that this application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is requested. Favorable action by the Examiner at an early date is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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